

with FERC those existing reliability standards they propose to be mandatory in the interim.

The Electric Reliability Organization may delegate authority to implement and enforce regional standards to an Affiliated Regional Reliability Entity, which can enforce reliability standards and take disciplinary action against system operators and users.

As I said before, the real way to prevent brownouts and blackouts is through comprehensive legislation that stimulates the construction of new generation and transmission.

This legislation will help, but much, much more needs to be done.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and to pass it without amendment.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I commend the chairman of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on this important piece of legislation. I believe that this legislation, and the electric reliability organizations created by this legislation, will significantly improve the reliability of our transmission system. I understand that a question has been raised, however, about the potential scope of authority of these electric reliability organizations and specifically their authority to waive environmental requirements. I would like to seek clarification of this issue. It is my understanding that nothing in this legislation in any way waives or modifies any environmental requirements, or exempts any facilities covered by the bill from any otherwise applicable federal or State environmental law or regulations, including the requirements of the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the Endangered Species Act, or any other environmental law.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I share the concerns that have been raised about the potential scope of authority of the electric reliability organizations and would also seek clarification on this point. It is my understanding that in addition to not diminishing or affecting any environmental obligations, this legislation does not authorize the electric reliability organizations to direct or authorize any covered facility to violate or disregard the requirements of any Federal or State environmental law or regulation.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Environment and Public Works are both correct that the legislation will not affect or modify any requirements of our important environmental laws or authorize the electric reliability organizations to waive or modify those requirements.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I concur with the clarification by the chairman.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. I thank the chairman for this important clarification.

Mr. BAUCUS. I also thank the chairman for his clarification.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute be agreed to.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, as amended, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 2071), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

DEATH TAX ELIMINATION ACT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now turn to the estate tax repeal bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object. In fact, I should object. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate considers the estate tax bill, it be considered under the following limitation: That the bill be limited to relevant amendments, with the following exemptions of the minority: estate taxes and tuition tax deductibility; second, estate taxes and Medicare prescription drug benefit; third, estate taxes and long-term care tax credit; next, estate taxes and Medicare off budget; next, estate taxes and retirement savings tax incentives; and, finally, estate taxes and kid savings accounts; that all first-degree amendments be subject to relevant second-degree amendments, and that there be a time limitation of 1 hour for debate, equally divided in the usual form, on all amendments.

I also say, just taking another brief minute, that at least one of our Members believes it would be appropriate that we should not be able to bring this estate tax legislation forward until we dispose of the China PNTR legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, Senator DASCHLE and I have been discussing this matter in the hope that we could work out an agreement as to how we could proceed. We had discussed the possibility of certainly a substitute being in order on the estate tax legislation. I believe the Senator from New York, Mr. MOYNIHAN, had a substitute, or others, perhaps, joining with him would have a substitute, and other related or germane amendments to that issue. We even offered the possibility of having two nongermane amendments on each side.

Our problem gets to be when you go to five or six—I don't know how many were included in that list.

Mr. REID. Six.

Mr. LOTT. Plus, if you have a substitute and then you have, let's just say, one or two related germane amendments, then you have five amendments on each side—that is 10 amendments—and even if we got a time agreement, you are talking about 12, or more, or 14 hours, which would be a minimum of 2 days.

The problem we have in July is that we now have completed six appropriations bills, meaning there are still seven we have to get done.

I hope that, at a minimum, we get five or six more done in July because they are very important bills that need to get completed so they can get in conference with the House, so they can be sent to the President, so hopefully he can sign them.

We are talking about Agriculture; Interior; Housing and Urban Development; Treasury-Postal Service; Commerce-State-Justice—these are big, important appropriations bills. We have all those we have to do in July—a 3-week period—plus we have to do the marriage penalty tax elimination.

I think there is an overwhelming desire to get that done, on both sides of the aisle, although we still disagree on how to get it done. But the Finance Committee has reported that out in a reconciliation bill. And there is a desire to do the China PNTR.

I know we don't have the time to set aside 2 whole days in the midst of all that for the death tax. If we could just agree to a substitute and germane amendments—this is a bill that passed the House overwhelmingly. Sixty-five Democrats voted for it. Members in the House, regardless of region or race or sex, voted for it. Why does the Senate need to get into all these other non-related matters?

But I understand there are Senators on the Democratic side who wish to have a debate and votes on these other matters. I believe they will probably have an opportunity to come up on other bills before the session is out. But that is why I object at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. LOTT. Under my reservation, I yield to Senator REID.

Mr. REID. I say to my friend, I think what we have done these last 4 days shows we can move through things very quickly. There were over 150 amendments after we worked on the bill a couple days. So we probably resolved over 200 amendments in the Labor-HHS bill.

But I also say, in the short time I have been in the Senate, we have had some tax bills with hundreds of amendments and we have been able to work our way through those in some way.

As with the leader, we on this side of the aisle think there should be some change in the estate taxes. We want to

do that. We are getting the same calls you are.

But I say to my friend, we would be willing to take time agreements on these amendments. I am certain we could finish the amendments in one good, long day. We would take time agreements on these amendments.

On tax bills that have traditionally been brought up in the Senate, we have not had any restrictions on them. We will agree to have some restrictions, but we think this would be appropriate.

We will be happy to have our staffs work on this during the break, and as soon as we get back, the two leaders can again talk about this. We do want to bring up the estate taxes.

Mr. BAUCUS addressed the Chair.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, if I may respond to that, just briefly.

After the good work that has been done, in a bipartisan way, this past week, and after having participated in the effort that was just made to complete action on the military construction appropriations conference report, it has restored my faith that anything is possible in the Senate. I hope we can continue to work to find a way to resolve this and get it considered other than through the cloture process. I am going to hold out hope until the very last minute that we can get that done.

So we will continue to work. Our staffs have been exchanging proposals, and we will continue to do that right up until the time we need to begin voting, which would be, I guess, Tuesday or Wednesday of the week we return.

Under my reservation, I yield to the Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. I thank the majority leader very much. I assure him, as a member of the Finance Committee, we definitely plan to take up some form of estate tax reform. I don't know what version it would be, but clearly that has to pass this year.

In addition, however, I do believe there is one other matter that is even more important than estate tax reform, and that is PNTR for China. It far transcends appropriations bills, marriage penalty relief, bankruptcy reform. Getting PNTR passed in July, I think, is of such urgency and is so important that I am constrained to object to any unanimous consent request that sets the schedule for July unless it also includes a time when we are going to take up PNTR. I know the leader knows that is my view. I just hope that in working with the leader, we can work out some accommodation to reach that objective.

MOTION TO PROCEED—H.R. 8

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, in light of the objections—and I do object—I now move to proceed to H.R. 8 and send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented

under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 608, H.R. 8, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to phase out the estate and gift taxes over a 10-year period:

Trent Lott, Bill Roth, Charles Grassley, Larry E. Craig, Chuck Hagel, Jeff Sessions, Pete Domenici, Strom Thurmond, Jon Kyl, Thad Cochran, Jim Bunning, Craig Thomas, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Susan M. Collins, Don Nickles, and Wayne Allard.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this cloture vote will occur on Tuesday, July 11. I will notify all Members as to the time of the vote. In the meantime, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I would say there is a strong possibility we may not need a vote on this motion to proceed.

Mr. LOTT. If I may respond, I hope we can work through that. I thought maybe that would be the case. I want to say, again, I am still hoping we can come to an agreement to have some limited number of amendments that would be offered. Then we would be able to vitiate this whole thing.

In view of the time in July, I felt I needed to go ahead and get the process moving. And we still would have that option right up until Tuesday when we come back.

Mr. REID. Under my reservation, Mr. President, I also say we have worked very closely with Senator BAUCUS and Senator MOYNIHAN in trying to come up with an alternative, and some other matters that we believe should be brought up with this piece of legislation.

For example, in 1992, under a tax bill that came before the Senate, we, on the 25th, started considering that. We had 105 amendments, and a day and a half later it was all done. That legislation was totally passed. We had a number of amendments that were even offered by our majority leader on that important legislation. There was a wide range of amendments offered dealing with dental schools, tractors, and all kinds of things.

So we can work out a way through this. I think the proposal by the minority that we take up six amendments, with time limits, is something the majority leader should take another look at.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I now withdraw the motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is withdrawn.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, JULY 10, 2000

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until 1 p.m. on Monday, July 10, under the provisions of S. Con. Res. 125. I further ask that on Monday, immediately following the prayer, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and that then the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.R. 4578.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR RECORD TO REMAIN OPEN

Mr. LOTT. Further, I ask unanimous consent that the RECORD remain open until 3:30 p.m. today for the submission of statements.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. LOTT. For the information of all Senators, on Monday, July 10, the Senate will begin consideration of the Interior appropriations bill. We will be looking forward to having the Presiding Officer on the floor managing that important legislation. I am sure it will move expeditiously. Opening statements will be made and amendments will be offered during the day. Senators who intend to offer amendments are encouraged to contact the bill managers during the recess in preparation for consideration of the bill. Senators should be aware that the next rollcall vote will occur on Monday, July 10, at approximately 5:30 p.m.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. LOTT. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent the Senate stand in adjournment under the provisions of S. Con. Res. 125, following the remarks of Senators BYRD, WARNER, and LEVIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. WARNER. Before our distinguished leader departs the floor—momentarily I will propound a unanimous consent request which takes us another